

Message Text

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01
IO-13 /084 W
-----111026Z 009279 /11

R 110915Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4514
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 7645

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ILAB, IT, PINT
SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH THE MINISTER OF LABOR

1. SUMMARY. IN THE COURSE OF MY INITIAL CONVERSATION WITH THE MINISTER OF LABOR, TINA ANSELM I EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT AN APPROPRIATE FORMULA WOULD BE FOUND WHICH WOULD ALLOW BERLINGUER AND THE PCI TO DEMONSTRATE TO THEIR CONSTITUENTS THE VALIDITY OF THEIR CURRENT POLICY OF COOPERATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT WITHOUT CONSTITUTING UNACCEPTABLE CONCESSIONS ON THE PART OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS. SHE WAS LESS OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS IN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC-ORIENTED CISL WHERE SHE FEARED THAT RADICAL ELEMENTS WHO ARE NOT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CISL RANK-AND-FILE MIGHT PREVAIL IN THE UPCOMING NATIONAL CONVENTION. MINISTER ANSELM I CREDITED NATIONAL LABOR LEADERS WITH A COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE ON THE NEED TO REDUCE LABOR COSTS, BUT IMPOSING RESTRAINTS ON THE SIZE OF PLANT-LEVEL WAGE INCREASES COULD PROVE DIFFICULT.
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I ALSO RAISED WITH HER THE CRITICAL ISSUES CONFRONTING THE ILO, THE SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF WHICH WILL DETERMINE OUR CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP. THIS SUBJECT IS BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING MY INITIAL CALL TODAY ON THE MINISTER OF LABOR, TINA ANSELM I, SHE EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE CON-

CERN ABOUT IMMEDIATE PROSPECTS IN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC-ORIENTED LABOR CONFEDERATION CISL. THOUGH THE PREPONDERANT MAJORITY OF CISL MEMBERS ARE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC VOTERS, THE MODERATE LINE REPRESENTED BY CISL NATIONAL SECRETARY FRANCO MARINI, WHO STANDS CLOSEST TO THE DC AMONG THOSE CONTESTING FOR SUPREMACY IN THE CISL, IS NOT BEING CONVEYED WITH SUFFICIENT CLARITY. MINISTER ANSELMI THEREFORE EXPRESSED THE FEAR THAT THE MORE RADICAL ELEMENTS IN THE CISL, REPRESENTED BY NATIONAL SECRETARY PIERRE CARNITI AND GENERALLY INCLUDING ALSO ACTING SECRETARY GENERAL LUIGI MACARIO, WOULD PREVAIL AT THE CISL CONGRESS NEXT MONTH.

3. SUCH AN EVENTUALITY WOULD LIKELY CREATE SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR THE ANDREOTTI GOVERNMENT, THE MINISTER STATED. A CISL CONTROLLED BY THE CARNITI FORCES WOULD BE A THORNY PARTICIPANT IN THE GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO RESOLVE ITAL'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS.

4. THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED CGIL IS HAVING MANY OF THE SAME PROBLEMS BEING EXPERIENCED BY THE COMMUNIST PARTY, MINISTER ANSELMI SAID. CGIL EFFORTS TO ENJOIN RESTRAINT ON ITS MEMBERS IS CAUSING A CERTAIN DISJUNCTION BETWEEN LEADERS AND MEMBERS. BOTH THE CGIL AND THE PCI ARE BEGINNING TO LOSE THEIR ABILITY TO PREFABRICATE THE SUCCESS OF THEIR ACTIONS. MINISTER ANSELMI SAID THIS ACCOUNTS FOR THE HUMILIATION OF CGIL SECRETARY GENERAL LAMA AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ROME A FEW WEEKS AGO; LAMA, SENSING CONFIDENTIAL

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PROBLEMS, DID NOT WANT TO GO; HE WANTED TO SEND NATIONAL SECRETARY SCHEDA INSTEAD, BUT THE PARTY INSISTED, SAYING THERE WOULD BE NO PROBLEM.

5. ON THE POLITICAL SCENE, PCI CHIEF BERLINGUER WILL BE IN TROUBLE UNLESS HE CAN PRODUCE SOME PROGRESS TO DEMONSTRATE TO PARTY MEMBERS THE VALIDITY OF THE POLICIES HE REPRESENTS, MINISTER ANSELMI ASSERTED. IN FACT, BERLINGUER IS NOT ASKING FOR MUCH, SHE SAID, SINCE HE KNOWS THE DC IS NOT INCLINED TO GIVE VERY MUCH. BERLINGUER HAS NO REAL INTEREST IN A "GOVERNMENT OF TECHNICIANS" AT THE PRESENT TIME, AND KNOWS THERE IS NO CHANCE OF THE ENTRY INTO THE GOVERNMENT OF COMMUNIST MINISTERS. HE WILL BE CONTENT WITH INFORMAL BILATERAL AGREEMENT ON A FEW KEY POINT -- INCLUDING ASSURANCES OF NO EARLY NATIONAL ELECTIONS -- AND THE MINISTER EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS AND COMMUNISTS WOULD BE ABLE TO ARRIVE AT AN APPROPRIATE ACCORD. SHE ALL BUT STATED

THAT WE ALL HAVE A VESTED INTEREST IN BERLINGUER'S
POLITICAL SURVIVAL SINCE WHOEVER MIGHT SUCCEED IN
TOPPLING HIM WOULD BE MUCH HARsher.

5. THE MAIN PROBLEM IS OFFERED BY THE SOCIALISTS,
SHE SAID, WHO CONTINUE THEIR ABERRANT INSISTENCE ON
SEEKING TO OUTFLANK THE COMMUNISTS ON THE LEFT. THIS
SAME POLICY WAS BEING PURSUED IN THE LABOR FIELD BY
THE SOCIALIST LEADER OF THE UIL, GIORGIO BENVENUTO.
SHE ADDED THAT BENVENUTO, DUE TO HIS DILIGENT ACTIVISM,
DID ENJOY A CERTAIN PRESTIGE BUT THAT THE UIL AS AN
ORGANIZATION WAS A VERY MINOR FACTOR ON THE LABOR SCENE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 7645

6. WITH RESPECT TO RECENT INTERNAL ACCORDS ON LABOR
COST REDUCTIONS, THE MINISTER WAS CONVINCED OF THE
GOOD INTENTIONS OF THE LABOR LEADERS. THEY WERE
AWARE OF THE GRAVITY OF THE PROBLEMS BEING FACED,
AND WERE GOING THEIR BEST TO ACT RESPONSIBLY. SHE
WAS MUCH LESS CONFIDENT ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF
LIMITING THE SIZE OF PLANT-LEVEL WAGE INCREASES, THE
LIMITATION OF WHICH CONSTITUTE AN IMPORTANT PORTION
OF THE ACCORDS. THE TROUBLE, MINISTER ANSELM
CONCLUDED, WAS THAT LOCAL LABOR LEADERS, TAUGHT
FOR YEARS TO REGARD LOCAL WAGE INCREASES AS A DESIRABLE
MEANS FOR SKIMMING ENTREPRENEURIAL PROFITS, WERE
NOT TAKING KINDLY TO THE INJUNCTION THAT PROFIT

OPPORTUNITIES WERE NECESSARY IN ORDER TO ENHANCE
INVESTMENTS AND THUS JOB EXPANSION.

7. COMMENT: THE MINISTER RECEIVED ME WITH MUCH
GRACE AND FRIENDLINESS. SHE REMARKED FAVORABLY ON
HER IMPRESSION OF AMERICA'S VITALITY, AND ON
THE NEED FOR CLOSE COOPERATION BETWEEN OUR TWO
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COUNTRIES. SHE GAVE ME THE IMPRESSION OF BEING IN
FULL CONTROL OF HER IMPORTANT RESPONSIBILITIES,
AND OF POSSESSING STILL FURTHER POTENTIAL IN HELPING
GOVERN THE AFFAIRS OF ITALY.GARDNER

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